

West Greenville Community Newsletter

City of Greenville

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A Renewed Community



On Tuesday, November 2, 2004 citizens voted favorably on four bond referendums for the City of Greenville. Included was a bond for the Revitalization project in the West Greenville area. This issue will explain some of the details of the City's vision for this area.

The city's vision is to build a neighborhood that is safe, strong, stable and attractive where citizens are proud to live. In order to preserve West Greenville, we must reverse negative trends and create healthy housing markets in safe communities.

Through the revitalization initiative the city is employing various strategies to increase homeownership. In addition to building new homes, we are rehabbing houses in the neighborhood to market for resale to homeowners. This project will not only increase the number of owner-occupied homes, it will help spark neighbors to improve their properties as well.

This initiative will greatly improve the quality of life

a feeling of pride for residents. Loans, grants and other programs of financial assistance will be available to persons of low or moderate income in the area.

The city's revitalization effort is designed to remove unsafe and unsightly structures, provide street and utility improvements, increase affordable home ownership, and promote redevelopment and new construction. This effort will establish a safer, more attractive area for residents, visitors, and the entire Greenville community. Total cost of the revitalization project is estimated to cost \$13.8 million, with approximately \$8.8 million coming from federal funds.

Citizens with questions/concerns about the City's revitalization efforts should contact the City of Greenville Planning and Community Development Department at (252) 329-4481.

within this neighborhood as well as noticeably lowering the crime rate. We are confident that through improvements within the environment, we can further decrease crime and perhaps deal a final blow to what was once a thriving drug trade in this area.

Over the next eight years, the City will embark on a large, progressive plan to revitalize a 45-block area of West Greenville. The purpose of the Revitalization program is to revitalize depressed areas in and adjacent to the neighborhoods of Cherry View, Perkins Town, Biltmore, and Lincoln Park. The project would revitalize the area and build a sense of community and

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45-Block Neighborhood Revitalization Objectives

“Allow the entire neighborhood to engage and participate in community change... We see community education as the way we prepare and educate our children, parents, workers, businesses, and schools to reclaim their neighborhood.”



community change... We see community education as the way we prepare and educate our children, parents, workers, businesses, and schools to reclaim their neighborhood.”

Like many of the terms used in community development work, community building means many things to many people. However, in any neighborhood a wide range of community groups can assist in performing these tasks: citizens, churches and informal clubs and associations.

The city's primary focus is to revitalize the neighborhoods of Cherry View, Perkins Town, Biltmore and Lincoln Park that are in a state of decline through:

- Removal of blighted structures and undesirable land uses.
- Retention (by current owners) and rehabilitation of owner-occupied homes.
- Acquisition and assembly of land for suitable building site.
- Redevelopment of acquired properties for affordable owner-occupied and rental housing.
- Improvements to public facilities and infrastructure.
- Creation of a neighborhood commercial node with positive services for the community.
- Development of relationships with the private sector to leverage public funds to assist with revitalization efforts.
- Extensive code enforcement measures to ensure lasting changes.
- Stimulation of homeownership to 50% of all residences (currently 80% of residential structures are rental) through downpayment/secondary mortgage assistance and creative financing tools.
- Creation of parks, open space, and streetscape improvements.
- Community involvement in the development of activities.
- Collaboration with other service providers to create a services network for residents of the area.
- Regular assessment for necessary re-adjustments to revitalization activities and programs.

West Greenville - With A Face Lift - Is A Greater Community

Strong connections between school and community are extremely important to the success of our



students. Become involved in school activities - PTA or simply volunteer at a school event.

West Greenville has many attributes that make it a Great Community. Some of those attributes are the location, natural features, government, history, a transportation system, businesses, people, and resources.

A community's appearance sends an important message to current residents, potential residents and the overall health of the community.

In the near future, when citizens or visitors drive down the streets of West Greenville, they will

Immediately get an impression of a greater quality of the community.

People will have a sense of attachment to their community and are therefore ready to invest their time, energy and money in improving the community.

Well maintained homes and improved landscaping will all contribute to a better community. George Washington Carver Library expansion will attract families and land owners and without a doubt increase the value of our property. This alone will

have a huge and positive impact on the community.

It is vital that residents in the community are educated on property values and the importance of homeownership, recruiting new homeowners, facilitating homeownership among renters, and encouraging current property owners to improve their properties.

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A Home of Your Own!

Credit Basics Your Credit Report

Lenders make credit decisions daily by using credit reports from credit reporting agencies to screen their potential applicants and customers.

Your report details your credit history as it has been reported to the credit reporting agency by lenders who have extended credit to you. Your credit report lists what types of credit you use, the length of time your accounts have been open, and whether you've paid your bills on time. It tells lenders how much credit you've used and whether you're seeking new sources of credit.

Your credit report reveals many aspects of your borrowing activities. All pieces of information should be considered in relationship to other pieces of information. The ability to quickly, fairly and consistently consider all this information is what makes credit scoring so useful.

How Credit Scoring Can Help You

Credit scores give lenders a fast, objective measurement of your credit risk. Before the use of scoring, the credit granting process was slow, inconsistent and unfairly biased.

Credit scores have made big improvements in the credit process. Because of credit scores:

■ People can get loans faster.

Today many credit decisions can be made within minutes or online, within seconds. Even a mortgage application can be approved in a matter of hours instead of weeks for borrowers who score above a lender's "score cutoff."

■ Credit decisions are fairer.

Using credit scoring, lenders can focus only on the facts related to credit risk, rather than their personal feelings. Factors like your gender, race, religion, nationality and marital status are not considered by credit scoring.

■ Older credit problems count for less.

If you have had poor credit in the past, don't let that haunt you forever. Past credit problems fade as time passes and as recent good payment patterns show up on your credit report.

Does My Credit Score Alone Determine If I Can Qualify for Credit?

No. Most lenders use a number of factors including your credit score to determine credit decisions. Lenders look at information such as the amount of debt you can reasonably handle given your income, your employment

history, and your credit history. Based on their perception of this information, along with their specific underwriting policies, lenders may extend credit to you although your score is low, or decline your request for credit although your score is high.

Check Your Credit Report

You should review your credit report from each credit reporting agency at least once a year and especially before making a large purchase, like a house or car.

Contact information for the Credit Reporting Agencies:

Equifax

1-800-685-1111

www.equifax.com

Experian

1-888-397-3742

www.experian.com

TransUnion

1-800-888-4213

www.transunion.com

If you find an error, the credit reporting agency must investigate and respond to you within 30 days. If you are in the process of applying for a loan, immediately notify your lender of any incorrect information in your report.

For Additional Information Contact:

City of Greenville
Planning & Community
Development
Gloria H. Kesler
252-329-4226



Your credit report demonstrates to potential lenders how you handle debt and helps them to determine whether or not you are a good candidate to lend money to.

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What Are The Facts?

Acquisition of Property within 45-Block Area

Properties in the 45-Block Area will only be acquired if those properties are considered substandard or dilapidated. The purpose of acquiring these properties is to remove slum and blight. By removing these conditions, the overall condition of the area will improve by reducing trash, vagrants and crime. If a property is acquired by the city, there is a very detailed process that must be carried out before and after the property is acquired. First the tenant and owner of the property must be notified of the city's interest in the property. The letter specifically states to the tenant **NOT TO MOVE** out of the unit. An appraisal of the property is then obtained. Just compensation for that property is then set by the Affordable Housing Loan Committee. Upon establishing just compensation, an offer is then extended to the owner. If accepted, the unit is then purchased by the city.

A notice that the property has been acquired by the city is then

sent to the tenant to make them aware of this change in ownership and that a city representative will contact them to assist with relocation.

Any time a property is acquired by the city, we are responsible for assisting that tenant with relocating to decent, safe, and sanitary housing. **NO TENANT IS FORCED TO MOVE IMMEDIATELY.**

Once again, the city is not buying all homes, only substandard, dilapidated rental housing. These structures are being bought in an effort to clean up the neighborhood and make it more attractive to all residents in the area. Assistance is available to eligible homeowners within the area to make repairs to their homes.

Boarded up properties

Through progressive efforts from the Neighborhood Services Division, through code enforcement, there are a number of structures boarded up. The owners of those

structures will be required to fix the properties up within a given time frame. If the owners do not fix up the properties, Neighborhood Services may demolish the structure. There are nine additional properties that are owned by the city that will soon be demolished in order to clear the lots for new construction. Unoccupied properties will be boarded up until such time the demolition can be completed.

Other Activities

Housing rehabilitation:

The city is in the process of rehabilitating 7 homes. Two of these homes will be made available for sale to owner occupants within the near future.

Tenant to Owner

Conversion: The City of Greenville in partnership with Self-Help Credit Union and the Affordable Housing CDC assisted three tenants to acquire homes. One of those bought the house they were renting and the other two bought homes in the area.

Questions relating to acquisition of property, boarded properties, housing rehabilitation or tenant to owner conversion should be directed to the Planning and Community Development Department at 329-4481. The Division's Secretary will direct your call to the appropriate staff member.

For More Information
Contact:
City of Greenville
Planning & Community
Development
Department
252-329-4481

Gloria Kesler
252-329-4226



A Home to
Call My Own!

Did you know the City of
Greenville offers Homebuyer
Education and Downpayment
Assistance to qualified
residents who want to buy a
home?

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45-Block Sample Homes

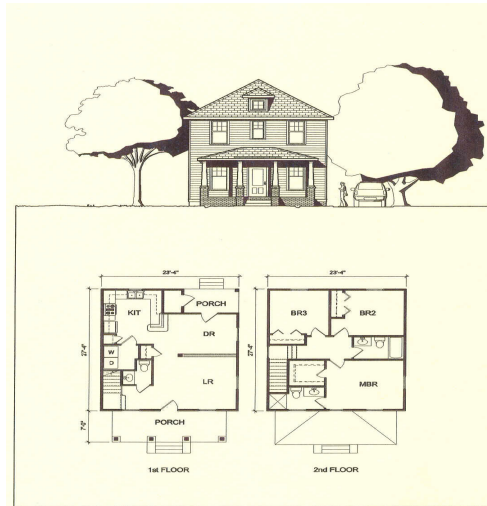
The City of Greenville will accept proposals to build new homes in the 45-Block area during the life of the project. The homes will be a minimum of three bedrooms and two full baths. Each home will include all major appliances. The plans selected for each street will blend well with existing homes on that street. Some of the homes will be two-story.

In addition to the newly constructed homes, several existing homes will be completely renovated for sell.

For more information about new homes or renovated homes, please call Karen Gilkey at 329-4505.

Downpayment assistance is available to eligible first time homebuyers. For more information, please contact Gloria Kesler at 329-4226.

Included are sample floor plans for the 45-Block area.

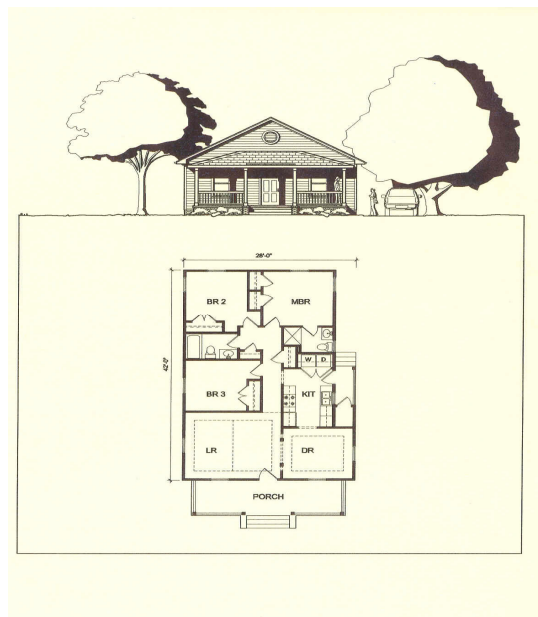


The Four Square

3 bedrooms with 2 1/2 baths. Open floor plan with spacious living and dining areas.

The Fulton

3-bedrooms with 2 1/2 baths. Open floor plan with spacious living and dining areas.



The Hinton

Three bedrooms with 2 baths. Formal floor plan with separate living room and tray ceiling dining room.